

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/9960

4 September 1981

Worldwide Report

NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT AND PROLIFERATION

(FOUO 10/81)



FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

BRAZIL

U.S. DECISION ON NEUTRON BOMB TERMED LOGICAL

PY132230 Rio de Janeiro LATIN AMERICA DAILY POST in English 13 Aug 81 p 4

[Editorial: "Neutron Controversy"]

[Text] The first thing to remember about neutron bombs is that they are neither better nor worse than other atomic weapons. Or conventional weapons, for that matter. They kill just as readily as other nuclear bombs. If you are against nuclear weaponry, you must be opposed to neutron bombs, as well.

The second thing to remember is that the neutron bomb controversy is a question about strategic warfare, not a question about the morality of nuclear warfare. The Soviet Union has attempted to place the neutron bomb issue on a moral plane but, in fact, it doesn't really belong there. Chemical and biological weapons do.

Neutron bombs are a strategic development of nuclear weaponry which makes a great deal of sense in the European theater where there is great population density and highly built up industrial installations. The idea of the neutron bomb is to block a massive conventional attack on Western Europe from the Warsaw Pact forces which have gigantic advantages over NATO. The neutron bomb threatens the Soviet Union and its allies because of the possibility to use the weapon to neutralize this advantage without destroying large tracts of Western European installations.

If you accept the nuclear deterrent defense posture that the superpowers have developed over the past 3 decades, you can't really condemn the development of the neutron bomb any more than you can condemn the cruise missile, the MX system, the backfire bomber or SS-20's. They are one more entry in the awesome arsenal.

The U.S. decision to produce neutron bombs is logical, given the realities of the Soviet nuclear threat and the aggressive development of their conventional forces which threaten Western Europe. The attempt by the Russians to stir up emotional arguments seems to us to be hypocritical since the Soviets undoubtedly have the neutron bomb under development themselves and they have shown little enough concern with the niceties such as the production and utilization of banned chemical agents, which are reliably reported being used in Afghanistan.

One of the arguments against the placing of neutron bombs on European soil is that their use would tend to escalate a conventional clash more rapidly into an all-out nuclear exchange. For that reason, the U.S. has decided not to stockpile the weapon in Europe but rather to produce it and keep it in the states in order to have it ready if it is needed. West Europe should have no quarrel with that.

CSO: 5100/2307

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY